

Refugee Service Gaps March 24, 2007 Reorganized Bullet Points

The following gaps in refugee services were identified during public meetings held in March and May 2006. Refugees, refugee services providers, and other community representatives were represented at these meetings.

➤ List of Core Values/Problems

- Access
 - Need more trained and paid interpreters (oral) and translators (written)
 - There is a shortage of interpreters, especially for more remote languages
 - Need additional resources to train general and specialized interpreters and translators
 - Access, outreach, delivery of ESL services – transportation, home base,
 - Access to health care
 - Transportation services [*this is an issue for all low income groups*]
 - Car, insurance, maintenance, [*Absorbs too much household resources*]
 - [*Lack of*] Public transportation
 - Need for reduced bus passes
 - [*Lack of after hours public transportation and lines of services from residential areas to centers of employment*]
 - [*Lack of*] transportation to Medical appointments
- Inclusion
 - Coordination with non-refugee and other ethnic minority communities for resources
 - Lack of inclusion of refugee issues with all immigrants in the overall discussion of economic and community development.
 - The idea that refugee services are separate from other immigrant tends to have a narrow political relevance and minimize collaborations.
- Empowerment
 - Refugees taking ownership of resettlement
 - Lack of empowerment of the refugee communities for community education on laws, housing, (train the trainer), domestic violence, youth issues, women issues, contract law
 - Lack of a conflict resolution system within the community
 - Using community resources to educate and resolve issues
 - Many refugee community groups lack the training, experience, and capacity to serve their communities (capacity building)
 - Need mechanism to empower
- Respect
- Cultural sensitivity
 - Lack of cultural competency in the workplace
 - Cultural competency of general community of refugees and community
- Lack of involvement of refugee community
 - Lack of a feedback process from refugees
 - Consulting the refugee communities on what is needed, how to solve issues
- Lack of cooperation between refugees and services providers
 - Need to improve communication between refugees, service providers and government agencies
 - There is a general lack of understanding of available services, who they serve, and how to access them
 - Need a flow chart, documentation of process, access to systems
 - Lack of resource guide who does what,
 - Need asset mapping
- Lack of a statewide vision of what constitutes good resettlement policy
 - Refugee conference
 - Refugee service policy development

Refugee Service Gaps

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- There is a lack of state, county, or city positions on refugee services
- Scope and priority of services are dictated by policy and federal mandates
- Lack of single point of contact for all [*program coordination*]
 - Need refugee ‘czar’ [*state refugee coordinator office*]
 - Need funding
 - Empowered
 - Central office
 - Accountable
 - Lack of accountability
 - Program
 - Service providers
 - Need to share outcomes
 - Staff
- Demand for services is greater than current resources
 - Funding is inadequate to meet the needs of the refugees being resettled in Salt Lake area and in Utah
 - Federal resources are time limited for individual support
 - There is a lack of mentors and volunteers who could help refugees navigate government systems or access other services
 - Need for mentors assisting case managers
 - Lack of education of volunteers
 - Lack of understanding what services are available
 - Lack of coordination of volunteers
 - Volunteer coordination
 - Many refugee services providers lack the training, experience, and capacity to serve the refugee communities (capacity building)
 - Government can’t do it alone
 - Lack of partnership between government and private resources
 - Involve new partners i.e. Latino community
 - Involve foundations
 - Lack of resources for elderly refugees at risk or have lost federal benefits, particularly SSI
 - Lack of uniformity of services
 - Lack of interaction between refugee program and the legislative body and governor’s office (GOPB), local government
 - Lack of refugee civic participation
 - Lack of legislative awareness of refugees
 - Lack of involvement of Ethnic Minority offices

➤ **Language Barriers**

- Lack of English language skills training
 - Some refugees are arriving illiterate in their own language which makes the acquisition of English language skills more difficult
 - Family Employment Program (FEP) participation requirements are too restrictive and should allow for more ESL training time
 - Competing needs, participation requirements
 - Federal policy on TANF and other federal programs does not allow refugees to have adequate hours in English classes in order to qualify for benefits
 - Additional resources needed in K-12 for ESL services
 - Need for maintaining and increased funding

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➤ Case Management

- Longer periods of case management are needed to ensure refugees are connecting with appropriate services after initial resettlement period.
- Lack of case management by professionals within the refugee population for continued assistance or increased cultural competency of case managers
 - Language barriers within the refugee professionals
 - Need to match language with the refugee client
- Physical and mental health issues from war trauma are longer lasting and need extended services not currently available
- Medicaid coverage is too limited (amount of time and services available)
 - Increase application response time
 - Need dental and vision
 - Need primary care provider (medical home)
 - Lack of time for enrollment for PCN and CHIP (open enrollment and caps)
 - Lack of communication structure/outreach
- *[Lack of] Child care [for other than employment e.g. ESL, acculturation/survival training, etc.]*
- *[Lack of affordable] Housing needs [New arrivals pay 50-90%+ of income for housing]*
- Need more pro bono professional services in diverse areas for the refugee population to address long-term successful resettlement in Utah. E.g. services for women, legal representation, higher education, home ownership plan, etc.

➤ Employment and Self-Sufficiency

- Refugees need help entering employment with higher wages so basic family needs can be met.
- Additional education and training is needed for career advancement and wage progression
- Simultaneous available employment / skills training
- Refugees face language barriers in the workplace
 - Many employers are not willing or are unable to accommodate language needs
- Lack of acceptance and acknowledgement of foreign education, especially higher education degrees, certification, and credentials by employers.
- Physical and mental health issues may be barriers to employment
- Lack of resources and education for refugee women, women's issues
- Will refugees be able to choose Match Grant?

➤ Community Development and Preservation

- Refugee community needs gathering places/space to reconnect and become a community again
- Lack of small business opportunities or micro-enterprise development
- Refugees need time, tools, and opportunities to maintain their artistic and cultural traditions and heritage
- Media, Education of public, cultural sensitivity, cultural competency
 - Refugee vs. immigrant
 - How does a refugee arrive
- World Refugee Day
- Positive contact with police/ education

➤ Youth Services

- Services for youth services, cultural competency of providers
- Cultural sensitivity of DCFS
- Need supplemental education services
- Need parent/child/school communication
- Cross cultural competencies
- Gang and crime prevention
- Need services to address more severe youth and family issues
 - Need solutions to address generation gaps